

**TOWN COUNCIL  
WORKSHOP MEETING  
MAY 14, 2003**

The meeting was called to order at 9:08 a.m. Present were Mayor Truex, Vice-Mayor Starkey, Councilmembers Crowley, Hubert and Paul. Also present were Town Administrator Willi, Town Attorney Kiar, and Town Clerk Muniz recording the meeting.

Mr. Willi explained that the purpose of the meeting was to participate with Council in their goal setting session. To assist with this process, Mr. Willi introduced Dr. Lance deHaven-Smith.

Dr. deHaven-Smith introduced his presentation about population dynamics and how it affected the Town. He spoke on growth challenges facing the Town and indicated that the Town was in a difficult situation. As a primarily residential city trying to preserve a certain quality of life, it would be difficult to generate significant tax revenue to keep public services and facilities up to date with population growth. Dr. deHaven-Smith stated that, although he had seen improvement in this area in recent years, this was not a situation that would drastically improve in the near future.

The three areas focused on in the presentation were Florida's growth, Broward County and Davie's changing population, and the Town's emergent problems. The recent census indicated that Florida's growth had exceeded expectations and Broward County was the fastest growing county in the state with the Town being in the heart of this population explosion. It was estimated that the Town's current population was nearing 80,000 and that young families and ethnic minorities were replacing the primarily senior population. Dr. deHaven-Smith stated that the two main challenges facing the Town were finances and political stresses. He explained how urbanization trends compounded these two issues over time. Dr. deHaven-Smith pointed out that another issue adding financial stress to Town services was the number of people who used these services without paying taxes, primarily commuters on major highways and the large educational complexes. He stated that under the Town's current tax base, for every new person that comes into the Town, the quality of life would diminish.

Dr. deHaven-Smith suggested three steps for the Town to consider: sensitivity to the separation of powers between manager and Council; continue to find revenues aside from taxes; and creating commercial zoning was critical and urgent.

Mayor Truex indicated that his two greatest issues were public safety and development. He felt that staffing levels in the Police and Fire Departments needed to catch up to a level in which the Town was no longer behind. Mayor Truex also felt that land use was a concern, especially the traffic issue.

Vice-Mayor Starkey agreed with Mayor Truex. In addition, she felt government efficiency needed further improvement. She indicated that a mission statement was needed, perhaps utilizing Nova Southeastern University in the developmental process. Vice-Mayor Starkey noted that the Fire/EMS contract needed to be settled. She felt that clear department policies and guidelines should be established, as well as a job description for the Town Administrator and a personnel procedure manual for Administration. Vice-Mayor Starkey spoke of the need for pending land preservation issues to be completed.

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Councilmember Crowley added the expansion of Town Hall and the annexation of Pine Island Ridge, United Ranches, and the Waldrep Dairy to the list established by Mayor Truex and Vice-Mayor Starkey.

Councilmember Paul spoke on the need to expedite the hiring process, possibly allowing the Police Department to handle it internally. Police Chief John George agreed and noted that this was a need of the Fire Department as well. Mr. Willi stated that at this time, one person could not be dedicated to hire police and fire personnel. He spoke of the attrition that occurred through the hiring process. Councilmember Paul addressed the problem of prospects being hired by other municipalities while the Town was involved in a lengthy hiring process.

Councilmember Crowley wanted selected areas within the Town to be examined for land preservation to lessen the demands on the community such as traffic, schools, population growth, and drainage.

Vice-Mayor Starkey felt establishing a Citizen Emergency Response Teams (CERTS) that was a priority.

Councilmember Paul spoke of the EMS fee and felt that raising the fee should be re-evaluated. She felt that annexation should be a priority. Councilmember Paul suggested that the position of the Town Attorney should be an in-house staff position. She encouraged the development of a master plan, and stressed it was necessary to fully execute the Town's vision of uses on current vacant land. Councilmember Paul thought that a comparison between affordable housing and "urban sprawl" should be conducted. She felt the Town would need to limit the number of CF class rezonings. Councilmember Paul wanted to move forward with the acquisition of a middle school. She addressed the Davie Land Trust as an essential move to help the Town preserve land. Mr. Willi indicated the Davie Land Trust would be on the next agenda.

Councilmember Paul noted that a plan should be developed for better control of safety, maintenance, and proper use of the trail system. She felt a location would need to be found for the use of ATV's and dirt bikes to get them off the road. Councilmember Paul mentioned the need for Code enforcement on weekends.

Councilmember Paul congratulated Programs Administrator Chris Kovanes and Grant Specialist Colleen Ryan for the great job they performed in acquiring money for the Town.

Councilmember Hubert wanted to see downtown Davie redeveloped as well as affordable housing Townwide.

Vice-Mayor Starkey felt there was a need to assist the Community Redevelopment Agency with marketing of affordable housing possibly with mixed uses and mixed income development.

Mayor Truex spoke of the possibility of abolishing the Cluster Housing concept.

Dr. deHaven-Smith spoke about the goals outlined by Council and advised that land development was a big item, which might be the most important yet the most difficult. Dr. deHaven-Smith asked what the priorities were and how Council would like to proceed.

Councilmember Hubert stated that commercial growth would need to come first to provide funding for the other areas. Vice-Mayor Starkey stated that the justification for future development would be driven by the need for public safety improvements, so that public safety would need to be a priority.

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Councilmember Hubert wanted to know what the Town was doing to entice businesses to come here.

Councilmember Paul stated that when the land was scarce in other communities, Davie would have the land to use to attract commerce according to the master plan.

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Development Services Director Mark Kutney stated that the Town was getting ready to review the evaluation and appraisal reports related to the comprehensive plan. He stated that this might give Council the ammunition needed to address this issue.

Dr. deHaven-Smith asked Council if they would have a problem readjusting the current land use within the Town to assure more balanced economic sustainability. Councilmember Paul stated that she would have trouble identifying some areas as commercial. Councilmember Hubert noted that some residents would not favor any commercial areas near them, but that it must eventually occur. Mayor Truex clarified that some residents only wanted "cows and parks" next to them. He agreed with Councilmember Hubert on the necessity of commercial development and added that the difficulty was in making it acceptable to residents. Vice-Mayor Starkey agreed with Councilmember Paul and felt that district focus groups could be helpful to ascertain the most viable development. Mr. Willi stated that the consultant hired to address these issues had not performed to the criteria established and was behind schedule.

Councilmember Paul voiced concern over the failure of focus groups concerning the Griffin Road corridor.

Planning and Zoning Manager Fernando Leiva stated that the EAR process was a great opportunity to update the current comprehensive plan to make it more consistent with what residents wanted. Vice-Mayor Starkey believed that some residents would not be opposed to development as long as it was properly buffered. Mayor Truex stated that the goal of the EAR process was to get the community and Council involved to legally make some changes. Vice-Mayor Starkey reiterated that the community focus groups would benefit the process.

Dr. deHaven-Smith summarized Council's goal to make the most of the EAR process and establish a participatory process to encourage community involvement. He then redirected the meeting to public safety, returning to the hiring issue.

Chief George stated that the need to have a Human Resources person at the Police Department was established last year when some forfeiture funds were used for that purpose; however, the person was recalled due to high volume of personnel. He stated that this needed to be readdressed in the upcoming budget year. Councilmember Paul agreed. Councilmember Crowley also agreed especially considering the fire bond, the possible increase of services, and the need for hiring additional staff in both the Fire and Police Departments. Chief George noted that because his staff conducted the background process for Police and Fire hiring, they needed a Human Resources person to be an integral part of that process. Mr. Willi noted that the PMG report had erroneously concluded that Human Resources needed no additional personnel or resources through build-out.

Dr. deHaven-Smith asked if everyone was satisfied with the plan that was put together. Chief George noted that the plan needed to be funded. He indicated that money usually ran out before the Police Department met the needs of the growing community.

Councilmember Hubert acknowledged that both the Fire and Police Departments needed more people, yet they had no money to hire them. Chief George commented on the number of personnel and units it took for the Fire and Police Departments to respond to one incident on I-595. He stated that this would increase along with population and noted how staffing issue negatively affected morale.

Dr. deHaven-Smith asked if Council was amenable to migrating towards more fees.

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Council replied in the affirmative, especially fees that would address the “users of services.” Vice-Mayor Starkey reported that Fire Chief Don DiPetrillo had been looking into that issue, but she was unaware of the progress made. Chief George noted that the Fire Department was able to collect recovery fees for transport and inspections.

Dr. deHaven-Smith asked about the EMS fee. Councilmember Paul indicated that this fee had not been raised due to community objection. Dr. deHaven-Smith felt that a few fees, including the EMS fee, should be brought to the community and discussed as it related to the Town’s ability to provide services across the board. He suggested that Mr. Willi gather things together that would show balance and distribution throughout the community. Mr. Willi replied that he would be glad to bring back the five-year EMS fee plan along with the Storm Water Assessment fee and a few other fees. Dr. deHaven-Smith provided a little more detail on how to present this to the community and noted the success of this approach in Saint Lucie County.

Housing and Community Development Director Shirley Taylor-Prakelt asked if fees should be raised or should users not currently paying fees be asked to pay. Chief George and Mr. Willi each noted how these issues were being addressed and confirmed that the educational community was contributing to provide for services and officers.

Dr. deHaven-Smith reiterated that until more revenues were available, there was not much more that could be accomplished as far as public safety. He redirected the discussion to government efficiency.

Councilmember Paul asked if the mission statement was already being address through the Sterling Process. Mr. Willi replied affirmatively and indicated that every division in each department already had a strategic plan and vision statement. He noted that the next step would be for Council to adopt a mission statement.

Dr. deHaven-Smith asked if Council had reviewed the mission statements prepared by various departments. Council indicated in the negative. Dr. deHaven-Smith asked if the Town would like to have a unified mission statement. Councilmember Paul indicated in the affirmative. Mayor Truex stated that although he was not particularly in favor of the Sterling Process, he thought it would be good for the Town to have a mission statement.

Vice-Mayor Starkey felt that community involvement could be included in the process of developing a mission statement. She questioned whether or not that should be a part of the process. Dr. deHaven-Smith suggested Council work with Mr. Willi on this issue to determine whether or not it would fit in the developmental process. Vice-Mayor Starkey noted the advantages of having a common mission statement in keeping departments and Town information focused and unified.

Dr. deHaven-Smith asked Council about the department policies and the Town Attorney position. Mr. Willi advised that all staff positions had a job description approved by Council.

Vice-Mayor Starkey suggested that an office manual and Town manual be compiled and made available. Mr. Willi stated that the Town already had a Policy and Procedure Manual for each department. Council asked Mr. Willi to provide a copy of the Manual for their review.

Dr. deHaven-Smith asked about the Town Attorney position. Councilmember Paul advised that it might be cost effective to have an in-house attorney. She advised that she had asked for research on the attorney’s billings and those incurred by other cities.

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Dr. deHaven-Smith asked the rest of the Council if there was support in reviewing this option. Mayor Truex, Vice-Mayor Starkey, Councilmember Crowley, and Mr. Kiar had previously determined through their research and experience that it would not be cost effective.

Mayor Truex spoke of the annexation issue with Pine Island Ridge and wondered if the Town's philosophy should include providing services should residents vote against annexation.

Vice-Mayor Starkey felt that Pine Island Ridge residents should be presented with the advantages and disadvantages of both annexation and incorporation. She spoke of the possible division of Pine Island Ridge into three different districts to minimize the power base if annexation occurred.

Mayor Truex asked if there was support to provide services to them should they decide to incorporate. Council replied in the affirmative

Councilmember Paul spoke of the need for a traffic crossing light at the Old Davie School. She discussed the need to reallocate funding for the realignment of Reese Road as part of "traffic calming." Mr. Willi stated that the Old Davie School crossing would be addressed in the next budget session. Council felt that the Reese Road alignment was a priority.

Councilmember Hubert asked if the Community Redevelopment Agency could pay for this improvement. Community Redevelopment Administrator Will Allen indicated that this area was outside the Agency's district.

Vice-Mayor Starkey spoke of the Florida Communities Trust and the Trust for Public Lands in regards to the purchase of 115 acres in District 4 off SW 136 Avenue, three blocks from Western High School. Councilmember Paul asked if formal direction from the Council was needed. Mr. Willi indicated in the affirmative and noted it could be done by resolution. Mr. Kovanes cautioned against becoming involved in a tip-bidding situation. He recommended that the Town withdraw from negotiations with the owner allowing a third party to negotiate, purchase the land, and turn it back over to the Town. Mr. Willi explained that tip-bidding was a compromised situation between a buyer and seller. He noted that a resolution for the contingency contract would be placed on the next agenda.

Mr. Willi also spoke of a move by Broward County Mayor Diana Wasserman-Rubin to reduce the authority for local municipalities in changing land uses. He asked if Council would like to take a position against this issue. Vice-Mayor Starkey asked Mr. Willi to provide Council with a summary of what was proposed and the impact it would have on the Town.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

Approved \_\_\_\_\_

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Mayor/Councilmember

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Town Clerk

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